DEAD SPACE™
SALVAGE
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DEAD SPACE

SALVAGE

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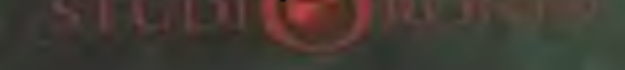

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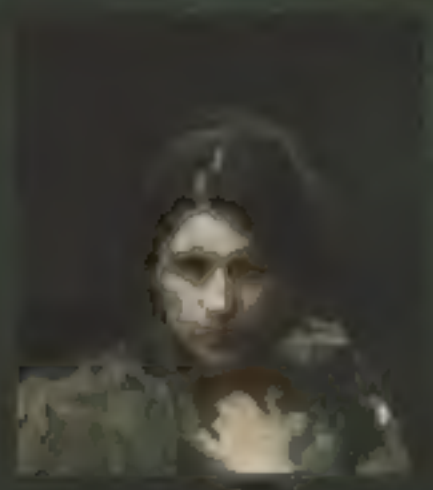


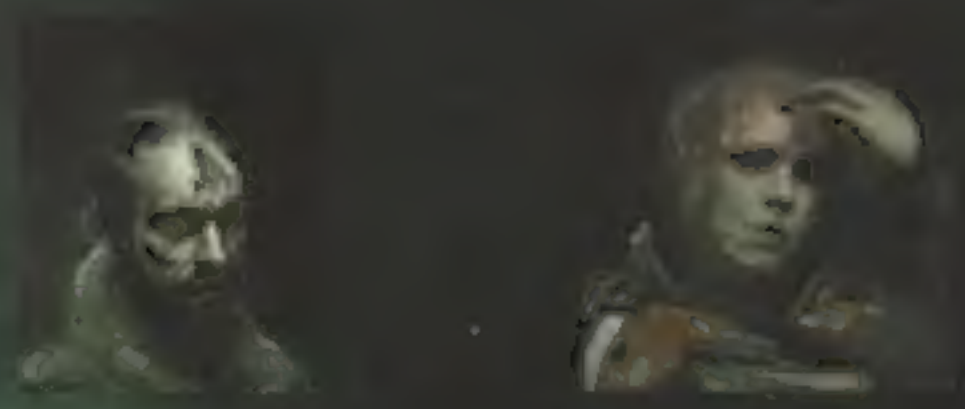
CAPTAIN JESSICA LI. Captain of the *Hunter's Moon* and de facto leader of the Magpies. Li is an ex-Marine who quit after an embezzlement scandal rumored to involve several million dollars. A "people person" who runs a tight crew.

STEFAN SCHNEIDER. Li's second-in-command. Schneider has a deep mistrust of all authority, since his legit mining business went under after corporate meddling by CEC and capitulation by Earth Government. Only Li can keep him in line.

BENEDYKT MALYECH. Captain of the *Black Beak*. A former CEC supervisor and practicing Unitologist, Malyech was fired for breach of contract after disclosing corporate secrets to the media.

JULIA COPLAND. Malyech's second-in-command. Copland is a lifelong criminal and scam artist who turned to freelance mining as a way to hide out from the law, and found the culture suited her demeanor.

GATURA OKEKE. Captain of the *Sunset*. A former commercial pilot who was fired for insubordination. Okeke is the Magpie's resident gearhead and a moderate Unitologist.



WENBO & THORSSEN. *Hunter's Moon* crewmembers.

VENSCHIFF & GOTTHEDDIR. *Black Beak* crewmembers.

BELLEVIN. Captain of the *Liberté*.Bellevin has been a freelance miner all his working life, and knows the risk/reward ratio of illegal mining better than anyone.

DEFENSE SECRETARY DAVID CHANG. A high-ranking official of Earth Government famed for making tough decisions and his hawkish attitude to the military's role in Government.

THE ORACLES. Agents of unknown record.

WHAT-
URK-

Captain!

Wake up!

Uhhh...

You should really try meds. Your mumbling's getting worse.

I'm fine, Julia.

What's up?

We hit a motherlode.

Venschiff's parked us right in the middle.

What are we looking at?

Iron, copper, the usual—

—but also vanadium, molybdenum, even platinum.

Li's crew found platinum last month, right?

And Okeke the week before that, yeah.

There's definitely some valuable shit out here, if we can find it.

Ok then...

...Let's go get it.

MAGPIE SHIP BLACK BEAK
VIGILIS ASTEROID BELT
AEGIS SYSTEM

MAGPIE SHIP HUNTER'S MOON

Li, this is Malyech. You read?

Loud and clear, Malyech. What's your status?

Think we've got a winner here.

Good for a half dozen eggs, at least.

Sounds good. Everyone else has struck out today, so get Copland to post the co-ords and sit tight.

I'll alert Okeke and Bellevin.

Li out. Ok.

Around 85 percent. Another two, three weeks and we'll be done.

Schneider, how full is the nest?

Home, sweet home.

You mean cash, sweet cash.

Who wants to go home?

Well, Captain, some of us actually have sex lives.

When we're not swimming through rocks and dust in some galactic backwater, that is.
Funny, I thought that was your sex life.
Doch
And on that note...
Let's go get some action.

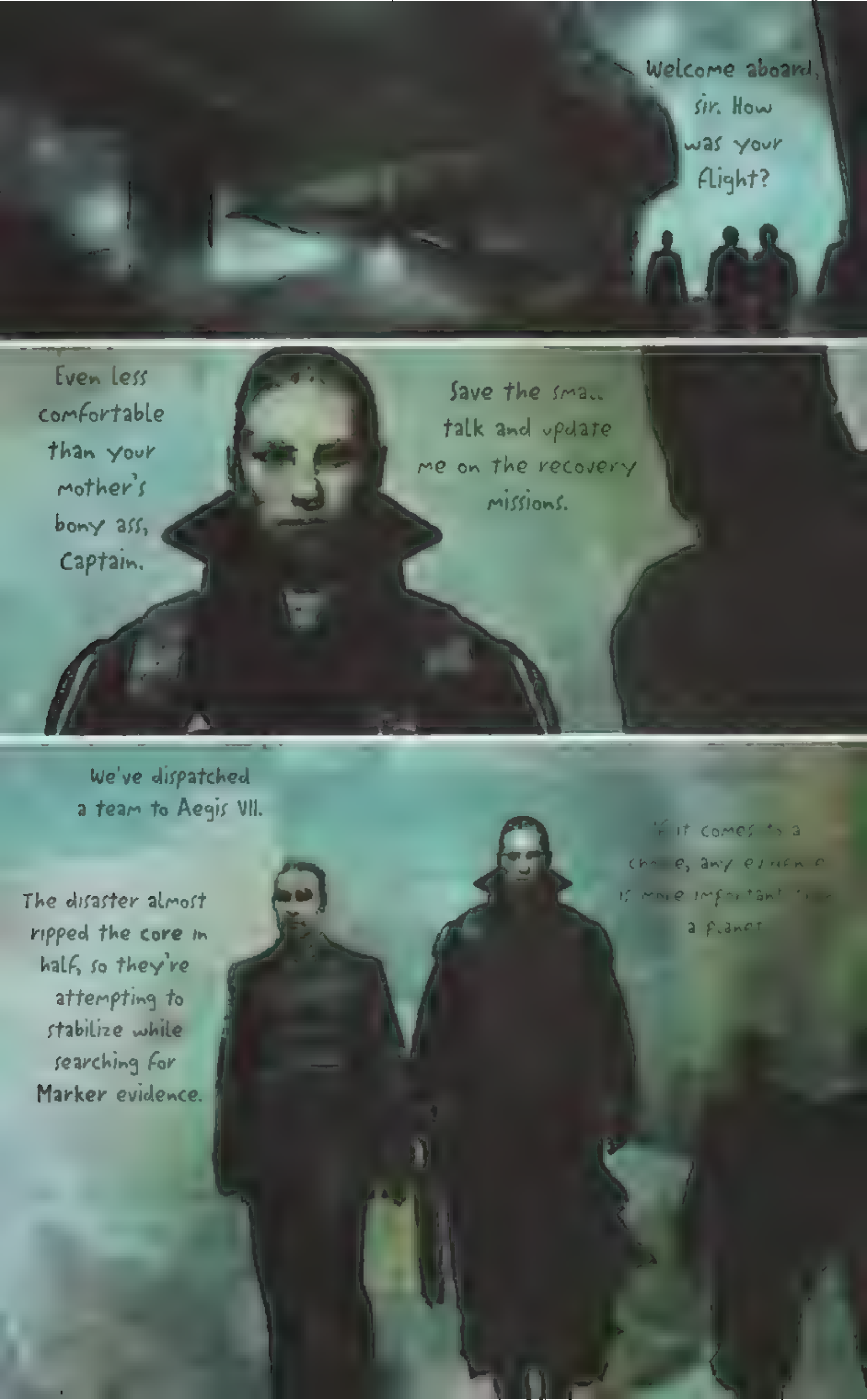
EARTH GOVERNMENT BLOCKADE
REGIS SYSTEM SHOCKPOINT

This is USM VICTORY hailing
inbound craft. You are in a
restricted zone. State your
identification.

We are the authorized
(link) of the Earth
Government Executive
ance 15-93 4382.

Get your ass
gear, fellas.
We bring you...

Defense Secretary
David Chang


Welcome aboard, sir. How was your flight?
Even less comfortable than your mother's bony ass, Captain.
Save the small talk and update me on the recovery missions.
We've dispatched a team to Aegis VII.
If it comes to a choice, any survivor is more important than a planet.
The disaster almost ripped the core in half, so they're attempting to stabilize while searching for Marker evidence.

They're aware of that

What about the Ishimura?

Unable to locate it.

Short-range scans are loaded with particle interference, probably a side effect of the disaster.

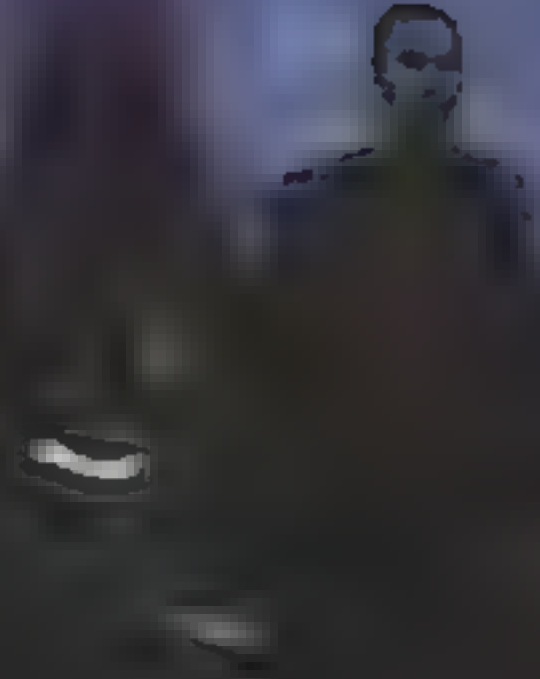
And since the system has been officially off-limits for almost two hundred years, we don't have long-range records.

Don't expect me to pull classified scans out of my ass, Captain. If I had them, I'd use them.

Understood.

We have hurtled sweeping the system for visual, but that would take a while. It's a big place.

All we had out here was a covert listening post, but that went silent weeks ago.



Of course, there is an alternate contingency.

Really?
And what's that?
What if the Ishimura was destroyed in the disaster?
Are we sure it's even out there?
Don't even think it.
The Marker was on board that ship, and if I leave here without it, some teenage punk will have his feet under my desk before I even reach Earth orbit.
Yours, too. Or that I am sure.
Now bring me the Ishimura.

—Vanadium,
molybdenum
and about a
quarter ton
of platinum.
MAGPIE SHIP
BLACK BEAK
Nice. Maybe we should
just lay the plat
and get out of here
with the rest. Now as
That blockade
makes me nervous.
MAGPIE SHIP
SUNSET
That blockade
is why we can't
get 3nd out, Okoko.
MAGPIE SHIP
HUNTER'S MOON
The minute we
leave this belt
they'll see us

All right,

Now we're go

ship

over the sy

boats

Shock generators

powering up

Schneider, right

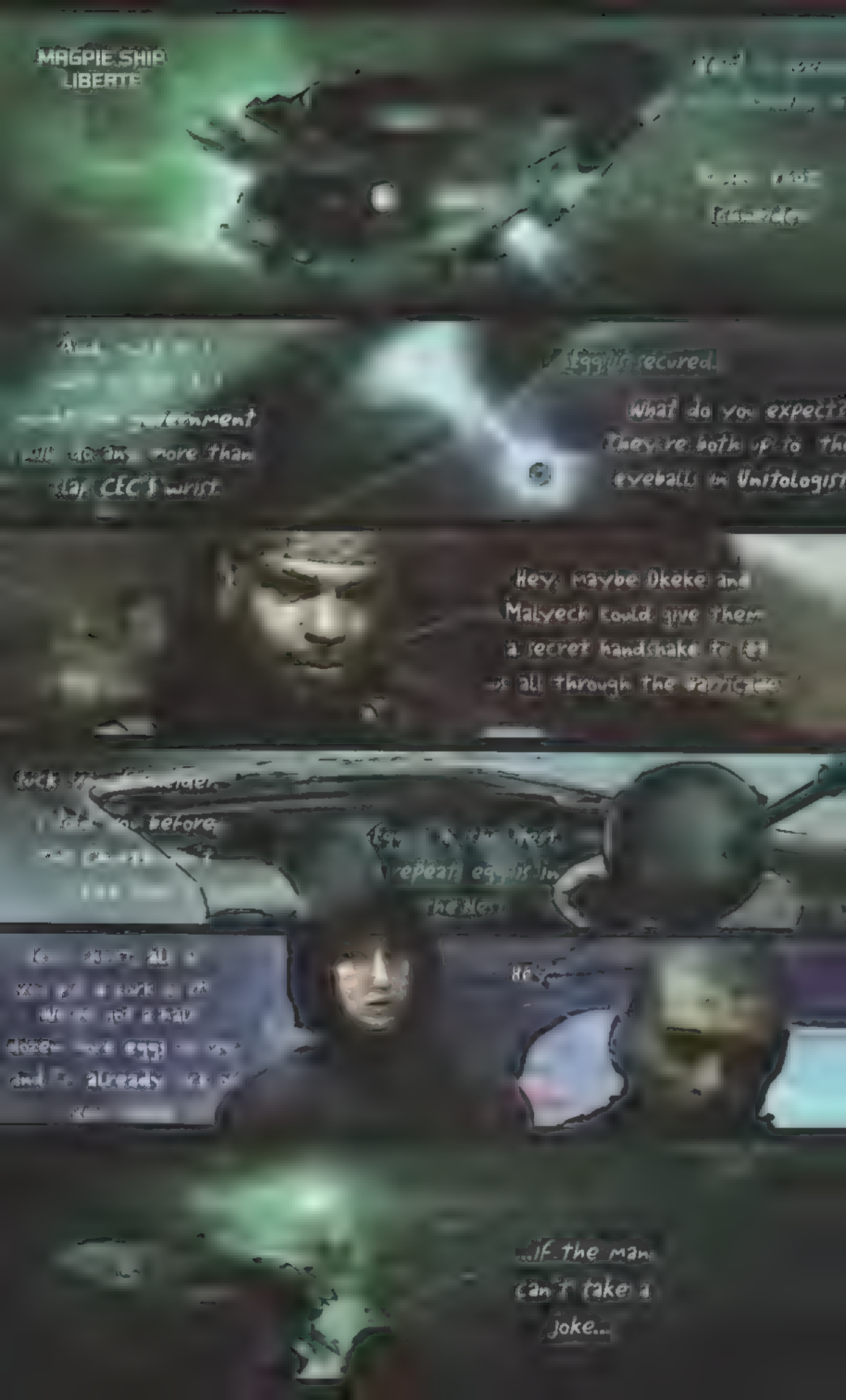
Besides, the planetcrack must have been illegal, too.

So I doubt the government's going to stick around for too long.

Hopefully long enough to rip CEC a new asshole. Couldn't happen to a nicer bunch of guys.

Shock in 3, 2, 1...

SHOCK!
Shock is green. Gravity wave imploding, singularity collapse in 3, 2, 1...
...And we're done.
Egg is laid.
Bellevin, secure the egg.
WILCO


MAGPIE SHIP
LIBERTE
Hey, maybe Okeke and
Malyech could give them
a secret handshake to get
all through the pandemic
...if the man
can't take a
joke...

We don't get to
see many stars on
Earth. Pollution saw to
that centuries ago.
were active
Oracles in this
operation.
Secretary Chang
Of course
I just don't
like being
blindsided.
We are not authorized to interface
with military or civilian operations
except as they directly concern
our priorities.

Bellevue
Uh, I went freelance so I didn't have to take orders any more. You're not in the Marines now.
remember that next time you come in with a job that you want to make a few hundred grand.
knocking, dude. You can do this with.
Fuck you, Schneider.
Without your vast knowledge, it would have taken us a whole extra day to find these rocks.
You couldn't afford me.

Captain

Private Comm
From The Sunset

I would sell it
to every magpie in
the galaxy and make
a fortune.

Jesus...

MALYECH+OKEKE 4 EVA

Okeke, what is the
name of Altman in the

What's what?
I didn't do
nothing.

HAHAHAHAHAHA!

No

do that?
Sorry, fellas, trade secret. Misspent youth, but you already knew that.
Stefan, that's enough. Quit
funny.
Thanks, Bellevin. Nice to know some people are still
Not out loud, don't.
Maybe not for

Magnetowaves
From all there are
in the [illegible], maybe?
Honestly,
have no idea.

You have no
idea? Pinch me,
I'm dreaming.

[illegible] serious.

I can't pin it
down.

Micromagnetospheres
shouldn't affect your point,
not even one [illegible] rigged
as this thing.

Huh. All back
to normal.

Maybe we should
take it offline for
a while. Let me check
it out.

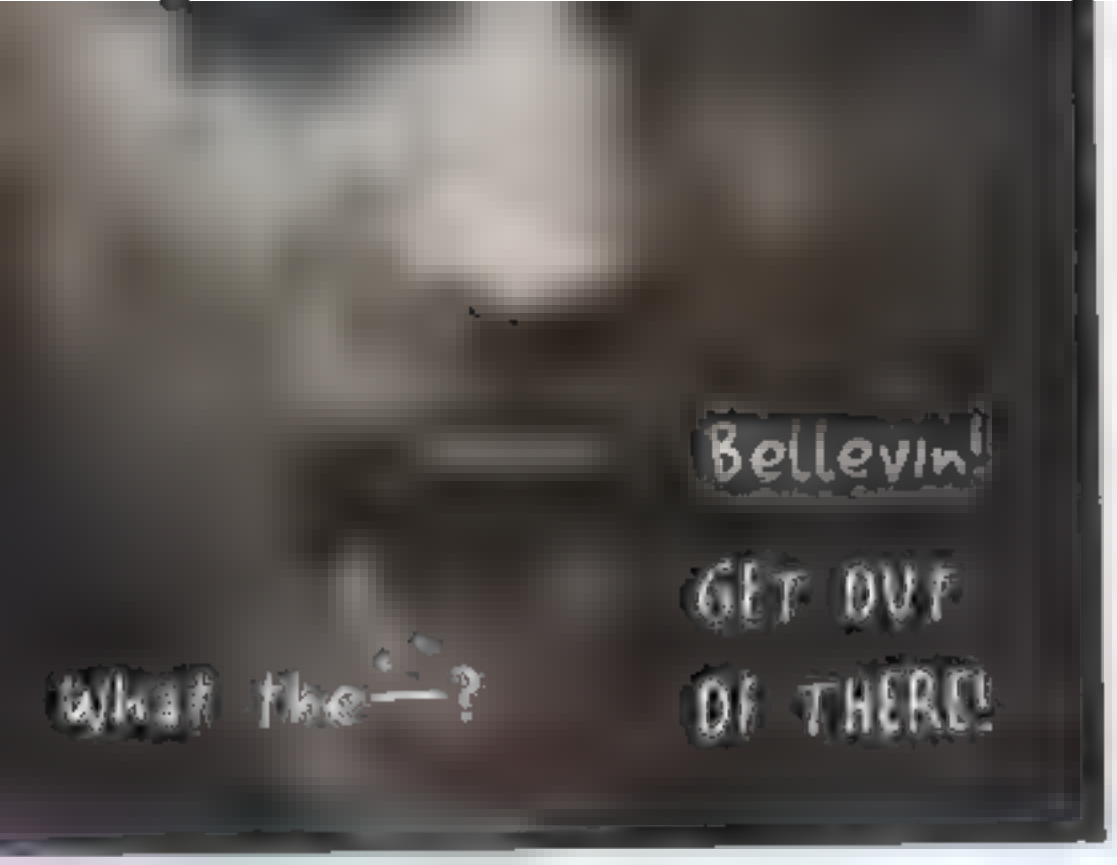
What's the
hold up?
Shocking need
new battery.
[illegible] it?
Or something.
Hold on.

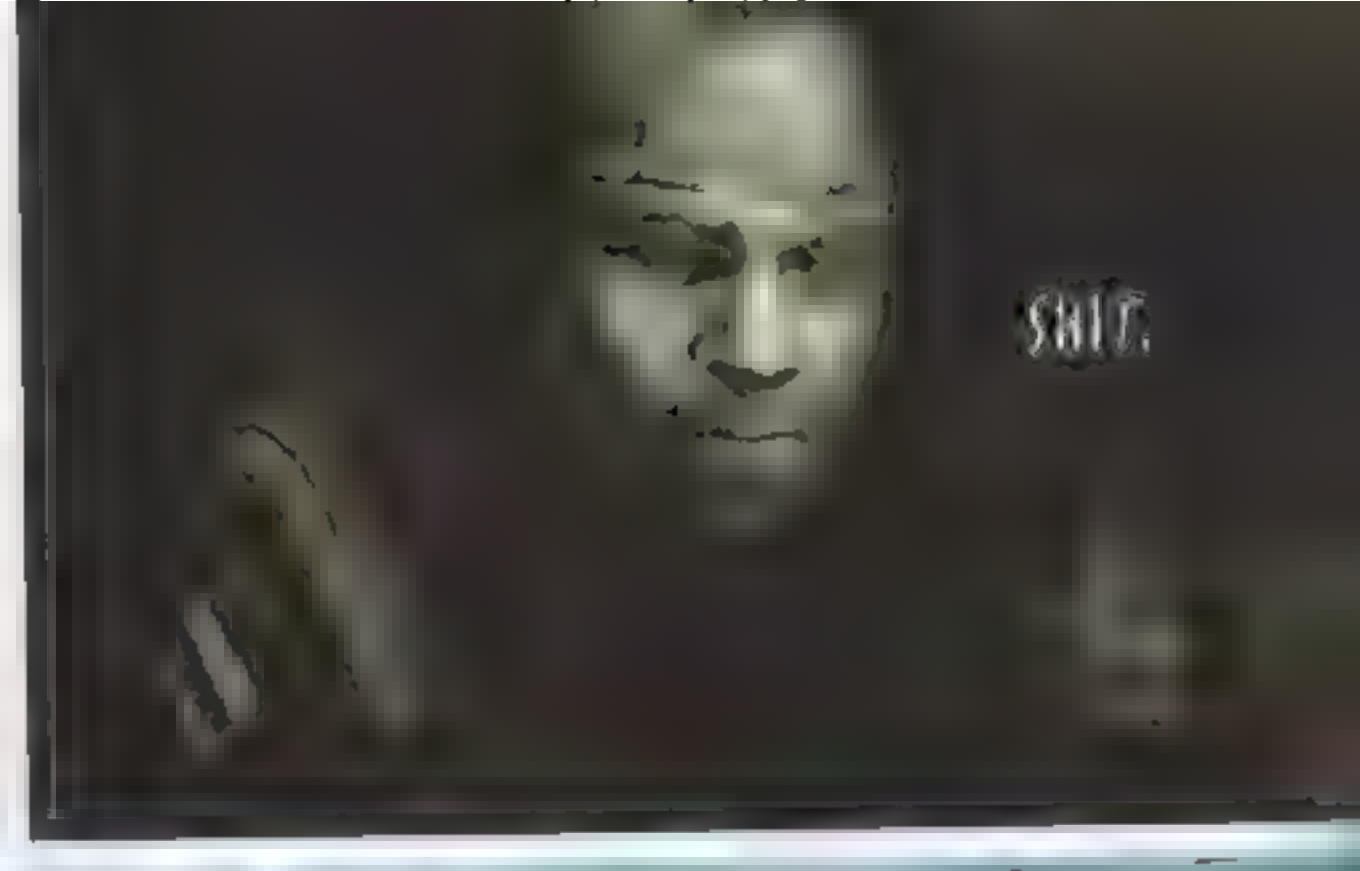
Yeah, that'll go
down well.

Don't worry
about it. If it
burns a vein I'll
take the heat.

[illegible] right, [illegible] by Ring [illegible] green focal vector. Even
[illegible] five [illegible] eight event horizon approx two hundred

Shock in 3, 2, 1.


Bellevin!
GET OUT OF THERE!
What the—?


SHIT.

THE NEST!
MOVE!
Shit!
We're hit!

Just a scratch!

We've got after that ship!

Sealant grid holding for now, Captain, but we've got to set down somewhere to repair this properly!

You heard The man. Thorssen, get after that ship!

Unschiff! Where the hell did that come from?!

It just appeared!

I don't know!

that thing
I told you we should have bugged out of here!
I'll bring every ship in the system down on us!
gravity tethers!
insane
time's out size!
Bellevin and his crew
of us on reverse thr
should be able to stop it!

This is a clusterfuck,
but we have to start
thinking about salvage.
That thing vaporized
the Nest, and with
it, our take home.
So we
Listen
up!
Captain...
What?!
We're not going
to believe this.
I've identified the ship...

on board.

Malyech do a flyby and check the ship condition.

Oh great, leak out here.

You're best qualified to judge the salvage state, Malyech, and we may not have much time.

Quit whining.

Systems is bad. Some auxiliary power and emergency systems in place, but it's patchy.

The old girl's been kicked around, then so

You hear that Okeke? Gray and Oz are out in multiple areas.

Schneider is hall the and door are inoperative.

Quarantine

Ullo shot in the
Whole segment missing
Ishimura, why are we
talking salvage?
This is the Ishimura,
Not a good
idea, Julia.
Or did you forget
most of us have open
warrants?
We go anywhere
near the government,
or CEC, with this and
the only possible ending
is all our asses in jail.
Then they'd take
back the ship anyway.
Everybody loses.
Venschiff:
flow up.
Anyone want to tell
what the hell those are

Airlock's building.

Reminds me of a girl I once knew.

But keep your mask handy, in case we step through a door somewhere and fuck

The fuck is all this stuff?

Smells like something died.

Like I said, reminds me—

Honestly, I got no idea. It's organic, but— Oh, shit.

Unless you want to swallow this O2 mask, Stefan, give it a rest and tell me what we're looking at.

Oh, shit!

What?!

look in there. This
place is filled with
the stuff
So the can-ty ff
a 70% match for
human compound!
Boom! Like a flingshot
And this is the crew.
a grip!
How do you know?
There's been cases
before, bad shockpoints
that smear the crew
all over the walls.
He did not
do this!
planetcracker
entire crew?

It's right, Schneider, you're way off.

There's no way this ship has supported a crew for a long time.

Whatever happened, it was before we got here.

Listen to the man. Don't go paranoid loco on me, all right?

Shit...

Now come on, let's head for the bridge.

If you think it smells bad out there, wait till you get in here—

Aaaaa...

JESSICA!

What just happened?

The door told you some of them were... malfunctioning.

I'm probably rig it. Give me a minute.

You OK? Don't want you ending up a bone soup like the crew here.

We don't know it's the crew. For sure, I mean, we don't know for sure.

Got it. Should hold, but it's a raw job, so be careful. Can't much fix it's stability, if you know what I mean.

This time Schneider, you go first.

So much for gratitude.

anyway
And took all the
positions it took
scattered
think we're
here they're
look like
Captain
can you hear me

No...

Please...

Please don't—

Oh. Oh...

My god.

What—
No—
Stop

again!
Copland:
What happened?
Shh, it's all right
remote. We need
get a listening tool
at them
Everybody down
You
that
crystal
seemed to freak you out

Copland was right.
The shackpoint drive
head looks like the
whole of engineering
took a serious beating.

Can it be repaired?
Even a re-conned
shackpoint is worth
plenty.

Going through now.
It's a slaughterhouse.

Hell to say.

We need to take
apart to be sure
but it look in
medical?

RAD COUNT RISING.
CURRENT LEVEL 0.37

What the
fuck is that?

Shift to auto-update
significant ch
to radiation level.

Hey, for all we
know this ship is
jumping hot.

So what's
you say Dkeke
Repair the ship

Scrap.

It's worth a
fortune either
way.
I say break it down
while we wait for
the blockade to lift,
then rent another
Nest and bring it back
to transport the parts

You're assuming
the government
is going to
leave any
time soon.
What if this
ship is why
they're here?

I have a very
bad feeling about
all this.

All the more
reason to break
it down as fast
as we can.

Look, I know this
is all a little
weird, but Dkeke's
right. I'm not giving
up payday just
because you're
freaked out.

Sure
thing.

Everyone get
the bridge, and
we'll talk this
through. Malyech

Ok, let's piece this
er what we
know?

We knew when we arrived in-system there was something going on farther out, on planet seven.

Broadcast activity picked up about a month ago.

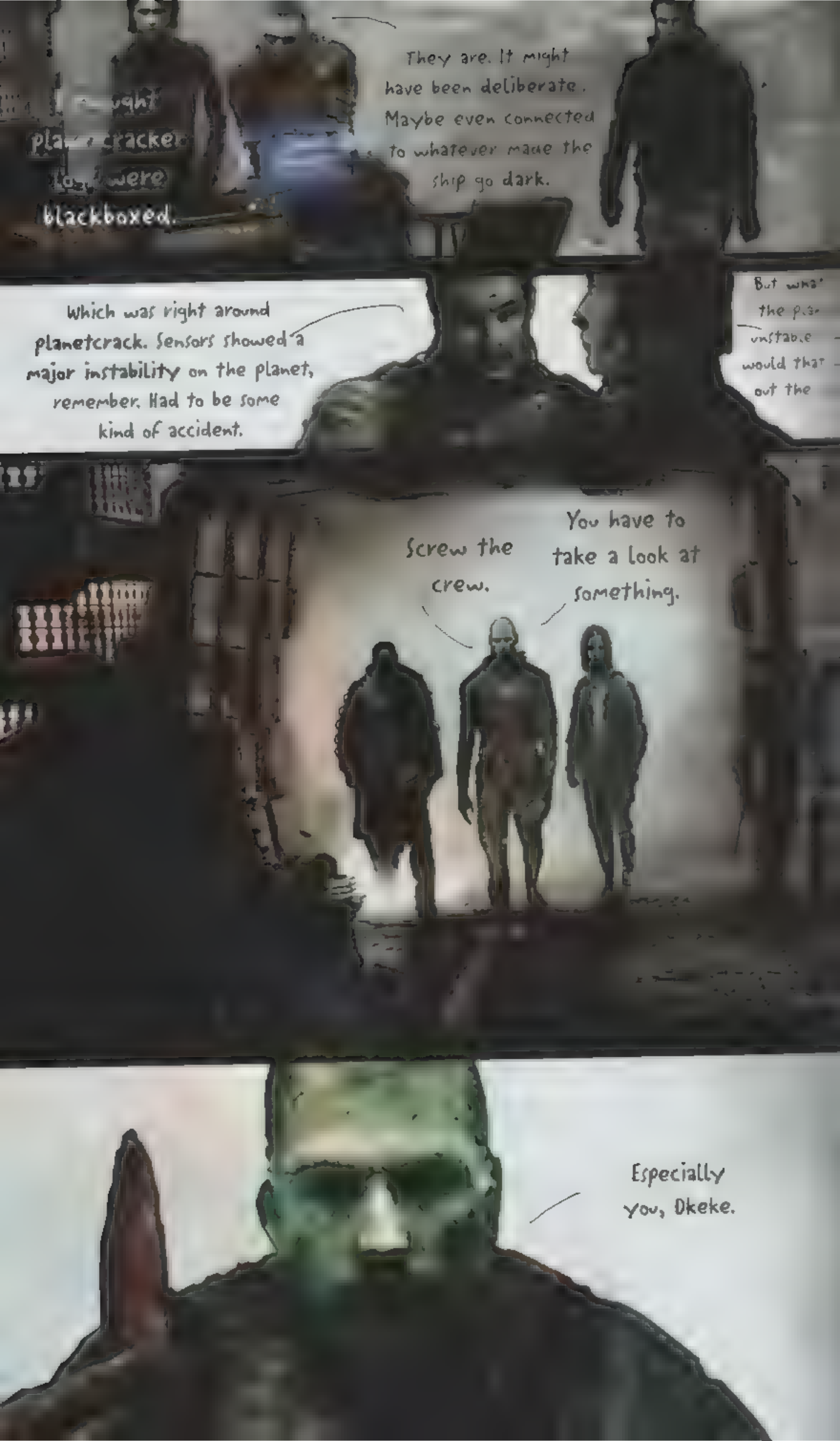
...ren
...Ishimura
...ed on
...te.

We didn't know it was this ship at the time. Hell, who'd have thought CEC would sanction illegal planetcrack?

Are we sure they did? What do the ship's records say?

Not much, right now. The systems are screwed up, and from what I can tell most logs have been lost.

I'm working on it, but I don't know how much there is left to retrieve.


They are. It might have been deliberate. Maybe even connected to whatever made the ship go dark.
Which was right around planetcrack. Sensors showed a major instability on the planet, remember. Had to be some kind of accident.
Screw the crew.
You have to take a look at something.
Especially you, Dkeke.

Embedded in the hull. At first, we thought they were just asteroid debris, but...

...Well, see for yourself.

What the fuck am I looking at?

Altman be praised.

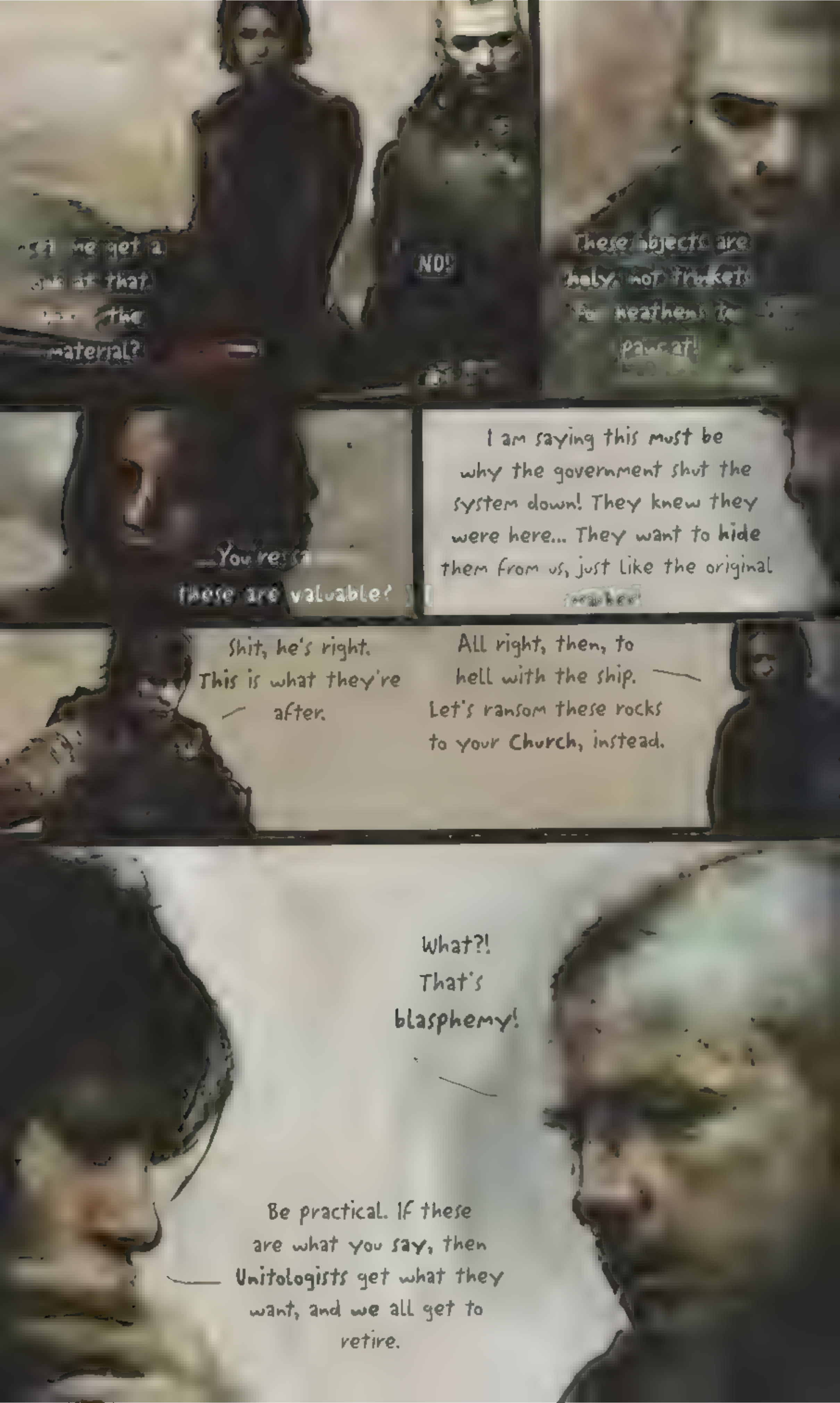
What is this Unitology hour?

Fuck you, Schneider.

As a matter of fact, it is.

These symbols match descriptions of the Black Marker!

You're looking at pieces of a holy artifact... shards from a marker!


...get me get a
look at that
the
material?
NO!
These objects are
holy, not trinkets
for heathens to
paw at!
...You're sa
these are valuable?
I am saying this must be why the government shut the system down! They knew they were here... They want to hide them from us, just like the original
Shit, he's right. This is what they're after.
All right, then, to hell with the ship. Let's ransom these rocks to your Church, instead.
What?! That's blasphemy!
Be practical. If these are what you say, then Unitologists get what they want, and we all get to retire.

HEATHEN!

Sonofabitch.

Jesus!

I've got him.

Someone find the

down.

You can't do that! He's a Captain, just like you!

He's fucking nuts. You did see the part where he hit me, right?

Benedyk

Maybe if you showed your peers some respect, it wouldn't have happened in the first place

...lenschiff...

...Stop them...

...Yes, Captain but we're out of time. Blowback...

...shes right. It's time. You need to calm down, get your head straight.

Don't make me throw you in...

You don't understand...

None of you understand...

The truth... at last.

With respect, Captain, don't give me that Unitology crap.

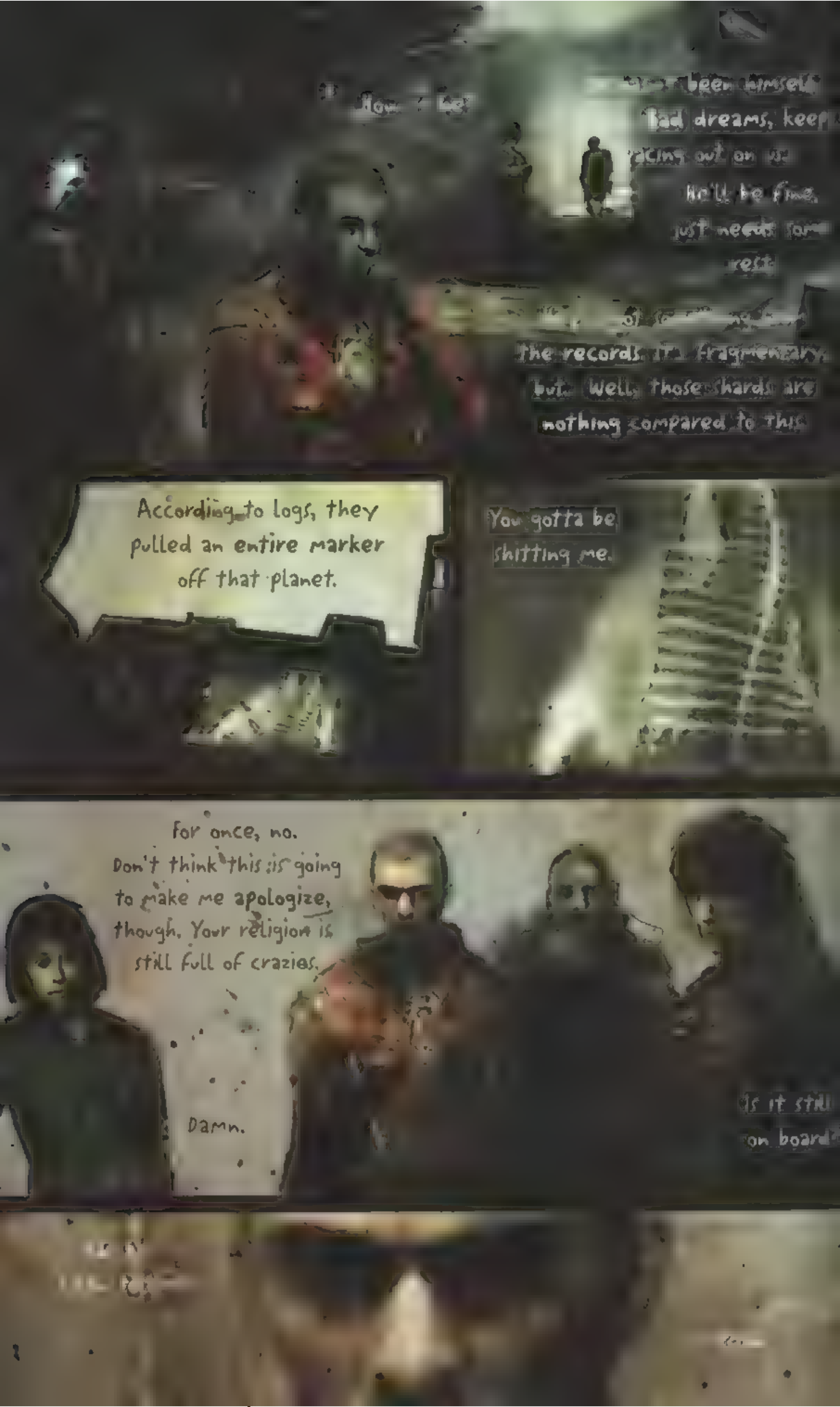
Practicing your faith is one thing...

but attacking Unitology over some worthless bits of crystal...

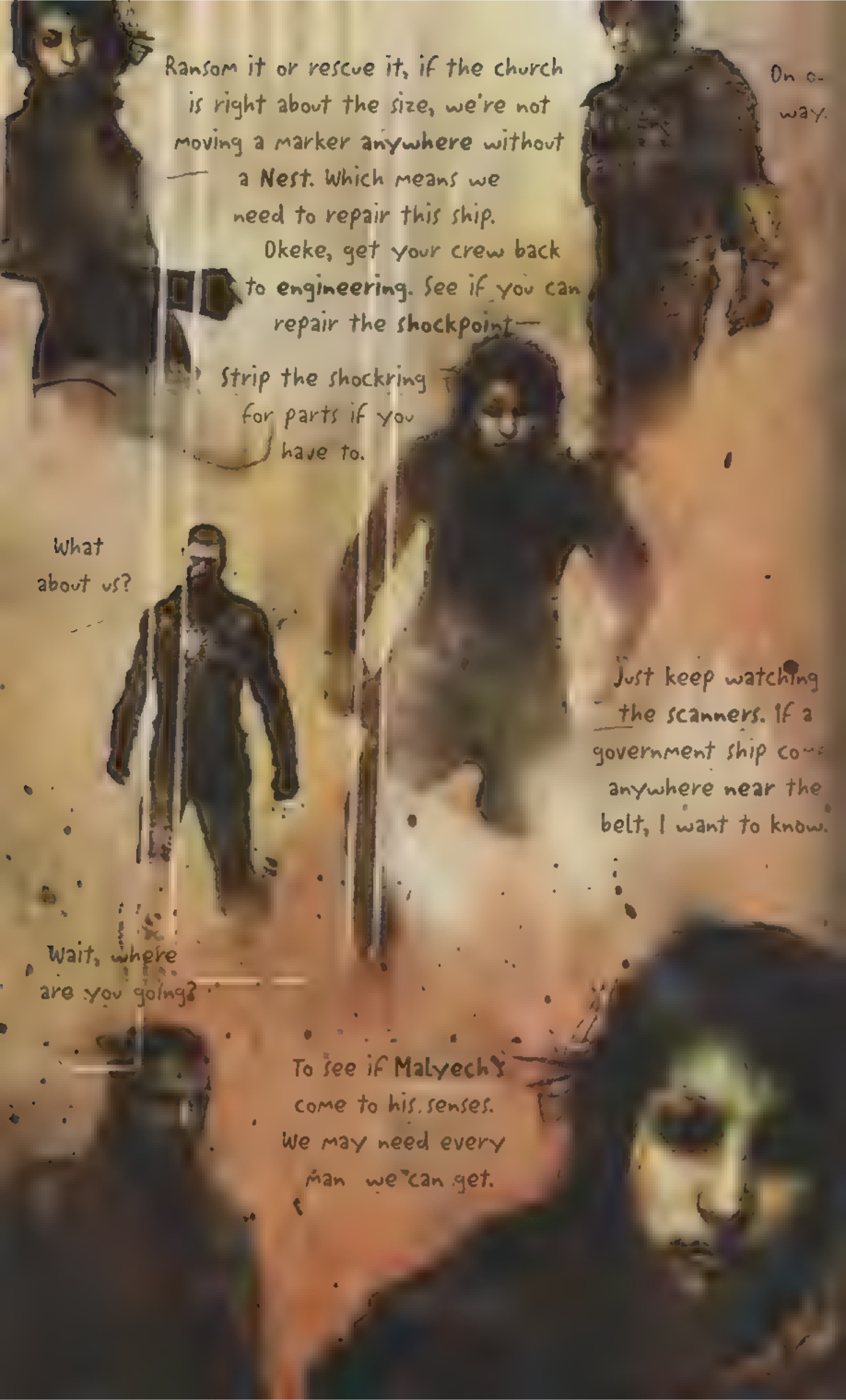
Get some rest.

I'll come check on you in a while.

...Goodbye.


been himself
Bad dreams, keep
acing out on us
He'll be fine,
just needs some
rest
the records. It's fragmentary,
but. Well, those shards are
nothing compared to this.
According to logs, they pulled an entire marker off that planet.
You gotta be shitting me.
For once, no. Don't think this is going to make me apologize, though. Your religion is still full of crazies.
Damn.
Is it still on board?

But we can't let the government get their hands on this!
Not without paying up, sure. That must be what they're after, not some pissy little shards.
Hold on—
Oh, shit.
That's not what I meant!
Applaud
The bitch is going to sell us out!


Ransom it or rescue it, if the church is right about the size, we're not moving a marker anywhere without a Nest. Which means we need to repair this ship. Okeke, get your crew back to engineering. See if you can repair the shockpoint—
Strip the shockring for parts if you have to.
On o- way.
What about us?
Just keep watching the scanners. If a government ship com anywhere near the belt, I want to know.
Wait, where are you going?
To see if Malyech comes to his senses. We may need every man we can get.

know where
can find the
Ishimura.
little magpie, why waste
let you waste my time
for a moment longer?
We are very busy.
Come with me.

Backtrace her arrival vector

Find out where she came from

Yes, sir.

negotiation

... leave you gentleman to it.

Thank you, Secretary Chang.

How are you feeling, Julia?

Uh... better, actually. I had a headache, but... yeah, I feel fine.

[illegible] stuff [illegible]

Now [illegible] everything

...'s spilling ... guts out ... there. These guys are good.

Sir, we've projected the source vector. She came from the asteroid belt.

We can pin it to within two hundred clicks.

Good enough. Take a small security crew, nothing big. I don't want it [illegible] a fuss unless we have to. If there are other magpies on board, arrest [illegible]

Thank you, Julia.

So do I get a reward now, or something?

I mean, this is valuable, right?

That's right, Julia.

You've done the right thing. We're very grateful.

A reward...

Something.

Who's there...?
Bellevin? I... I don't understand...
Relax, Bellevin. Don't be alarmed.

But you have to wake up.

Not truly. Not yet.

I'm not awake already?

You have to stop it, Benedykt. I know you don't want to. But you must.

No... no, it's just my mind again. Maybe I should get some meds..

They won't help you.

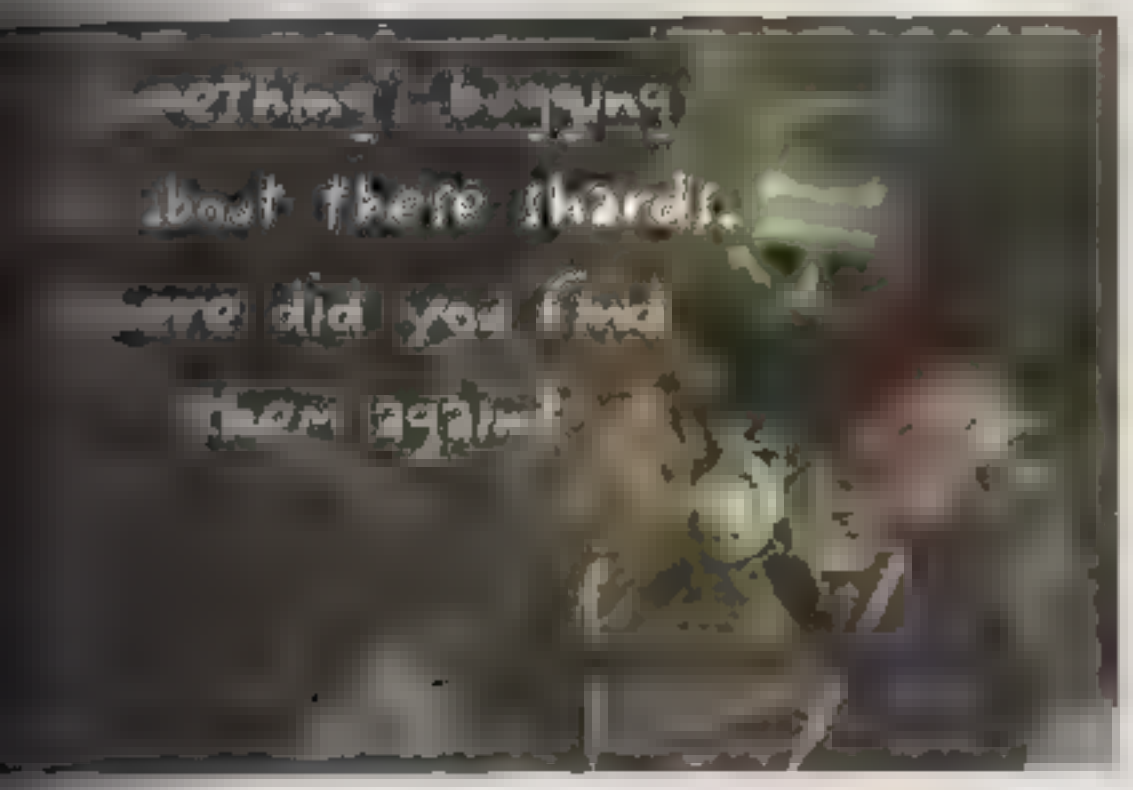
You have to help yourself.

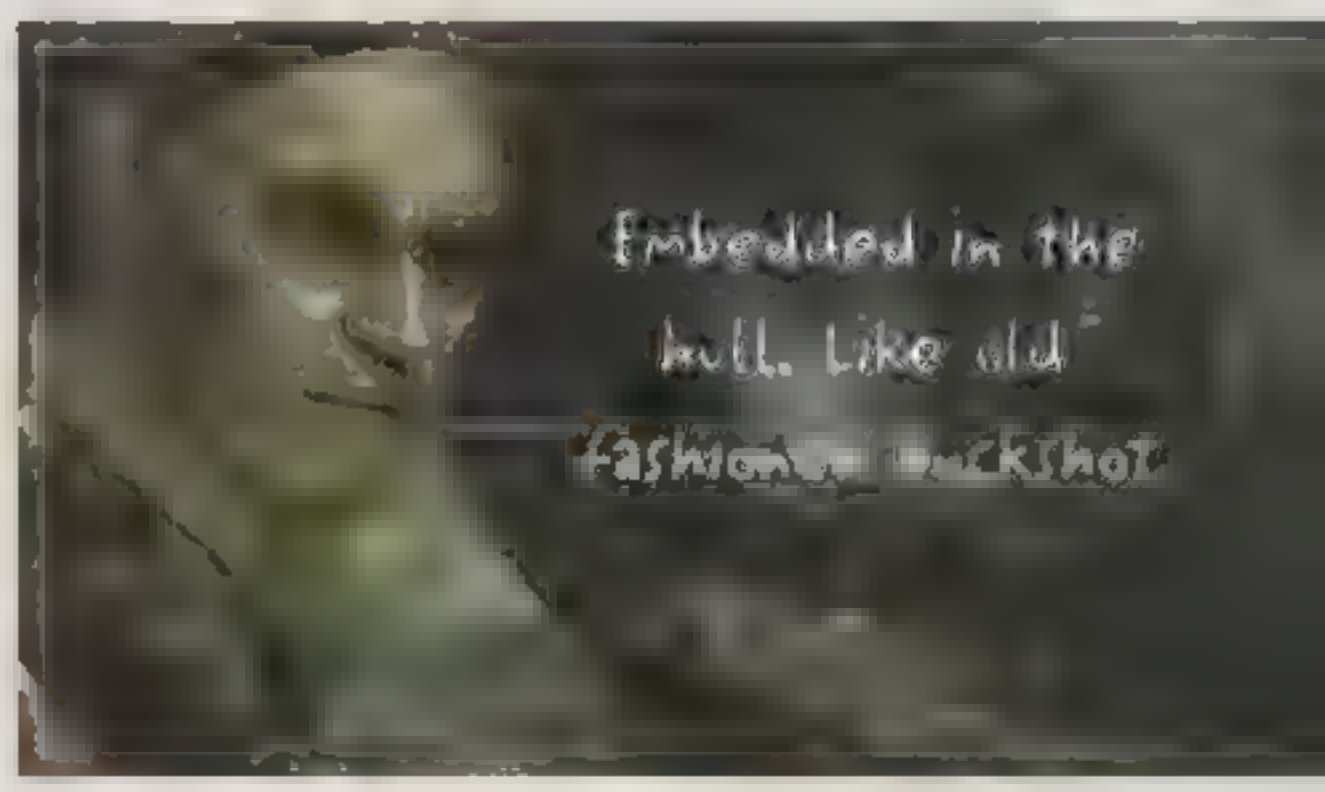
You already
have it.
feel it.
something
coming...

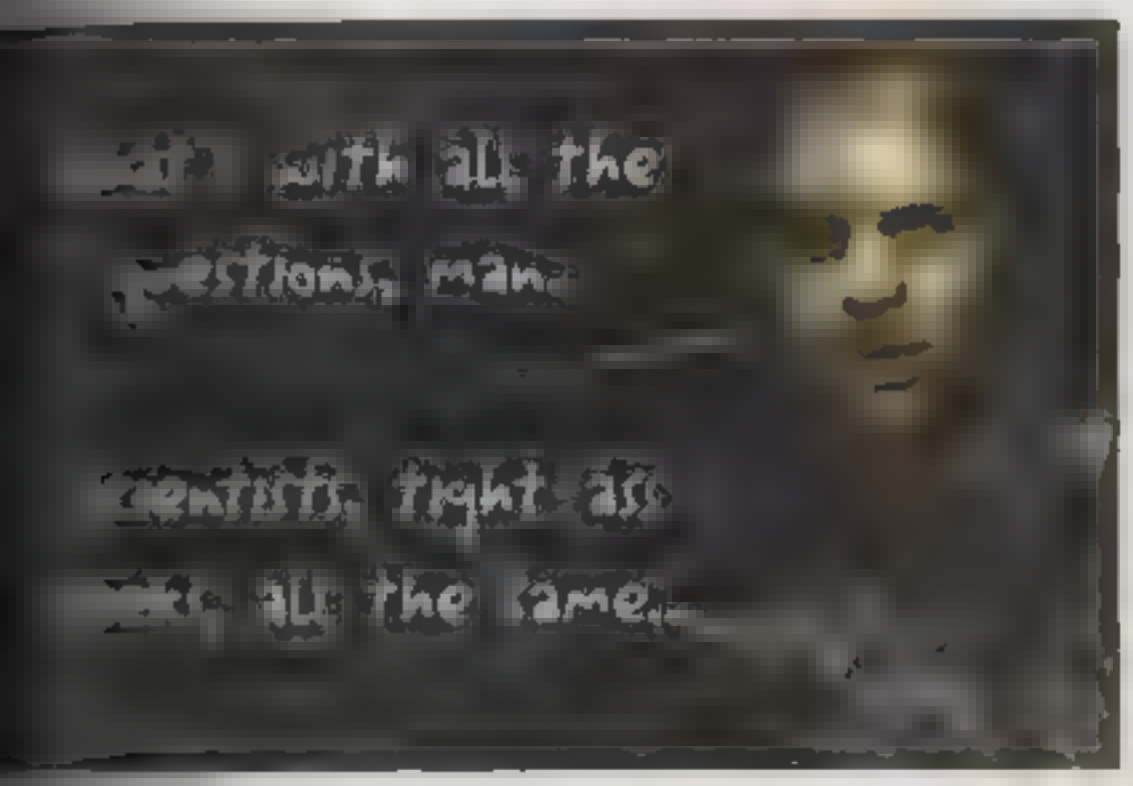
Goodbye
Benedykt...

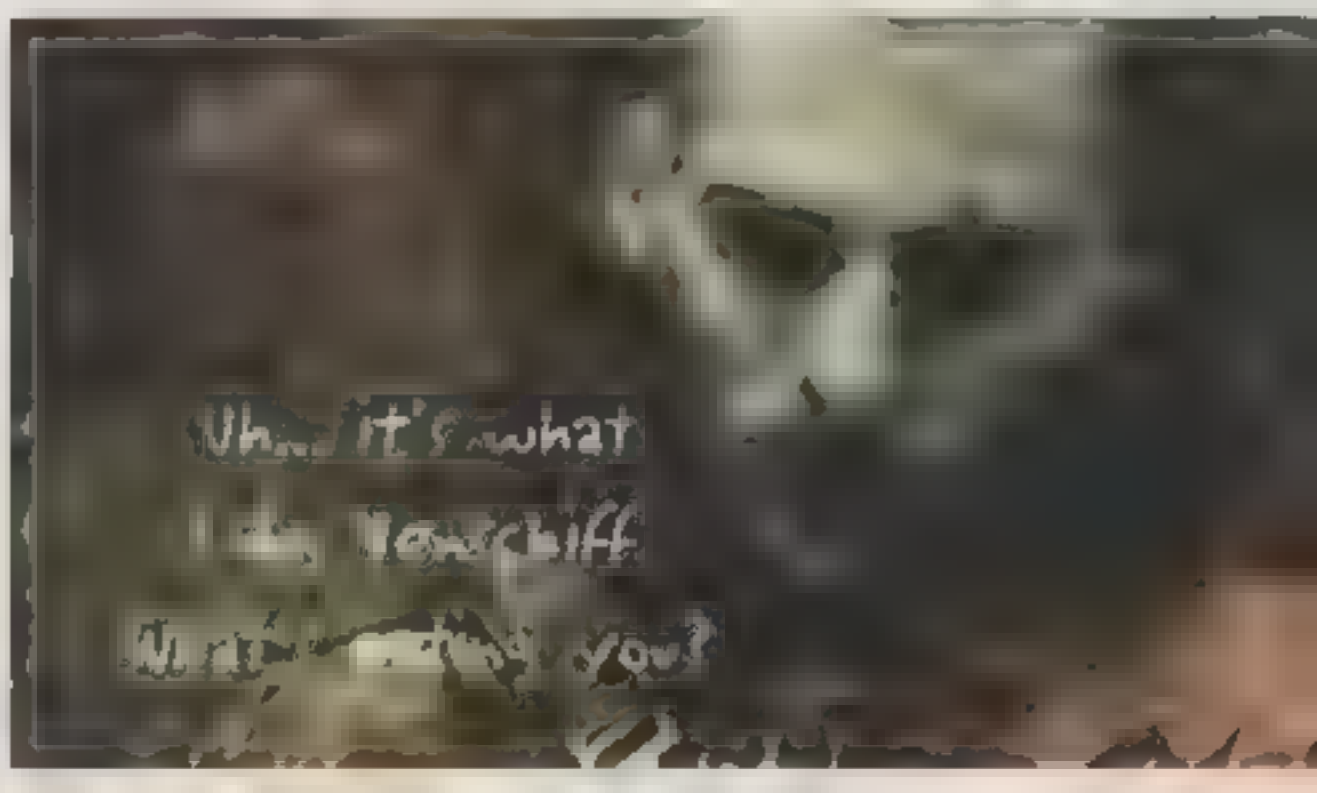
So now we just sit on our asses? I should be down there with Okeke's crew.

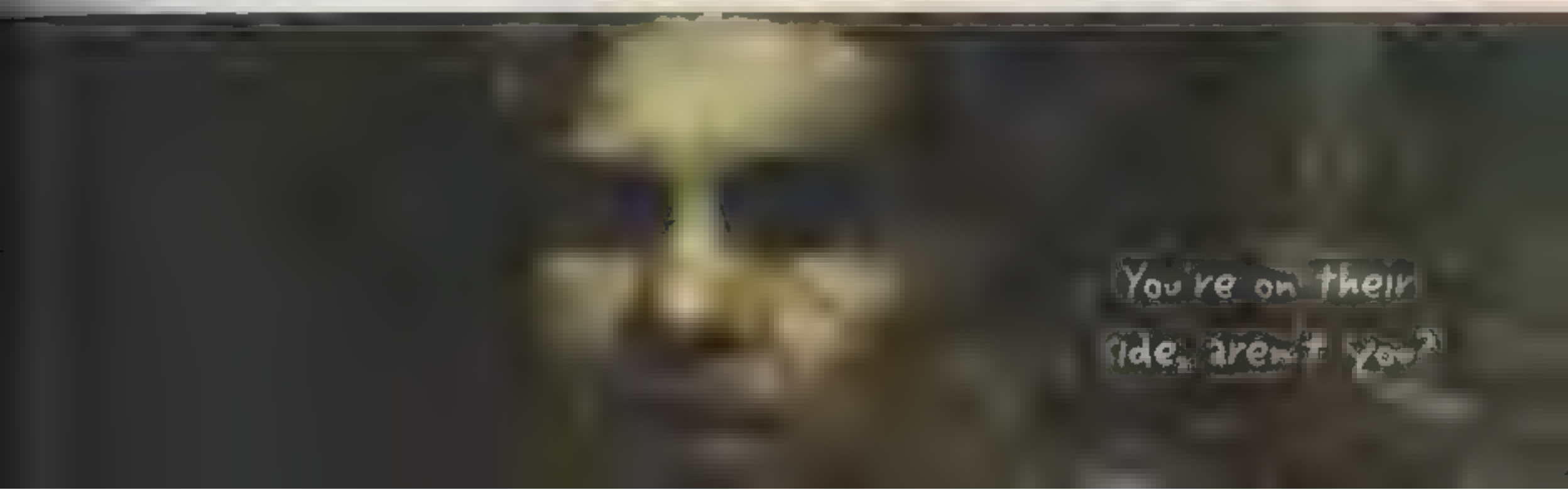
Don't get sore, Wenbo. Who's to say we won't need someone to crawl under a desk here, too.





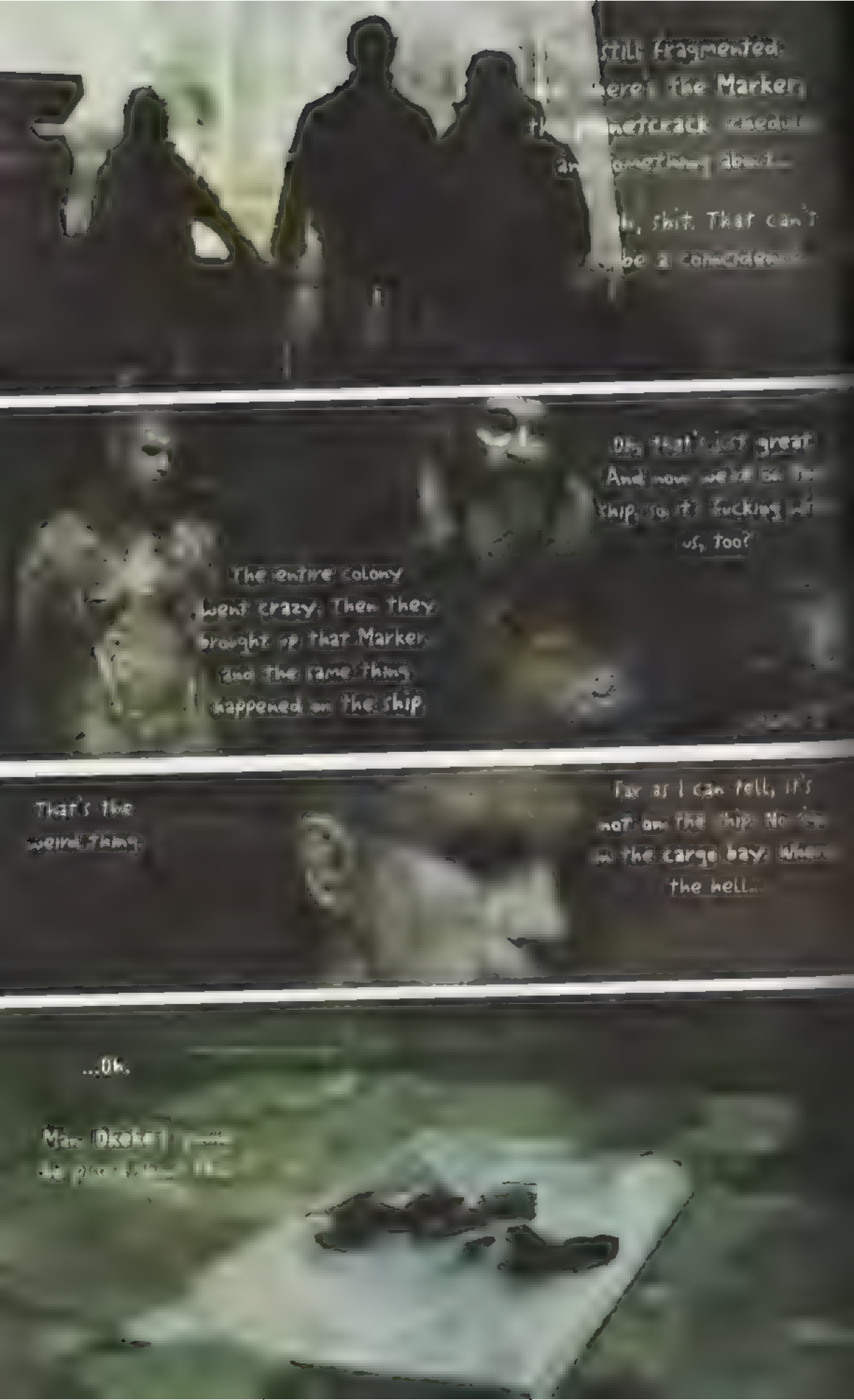






AKK!
Get him...
off...!
What the hell
are you doing!

What was that?
Log scanner's finished. Let's see what we've got.


Still fragmented.
Here, the Marker,
the network, needed
an connection, about
Oh, shit. That can't
be a coincidence.
Oh, that's just great.
And now we're on the
ship, too? Fucking wi
us, too?
The entire colony
went crazy. Then they
brought up that Marker
and the same thing
happened on the ship.
That's the
weird thing.
As far as I can tell, it's
not on the ship. No, it's
in the cargo bay. What
the hell...
...Ok.
Man (Okoye)

Who's there?

Identify yourself!

Jessica! Stefan! Where are you?

No, but we had the modern Venschiff flipped out.

On my way to the brig. Did someone come after me?

Great

Even better

So you're telling me Malyeck's probably not recovered yet?

[illegible] we've [illegible] [illegible] place together [illegible] the guy that damn Marker left everyone on board [illegible]?

Maybe we should [illegible]

I don't think we have to worry about that.

Reckon the Marker's —not on board anymore.

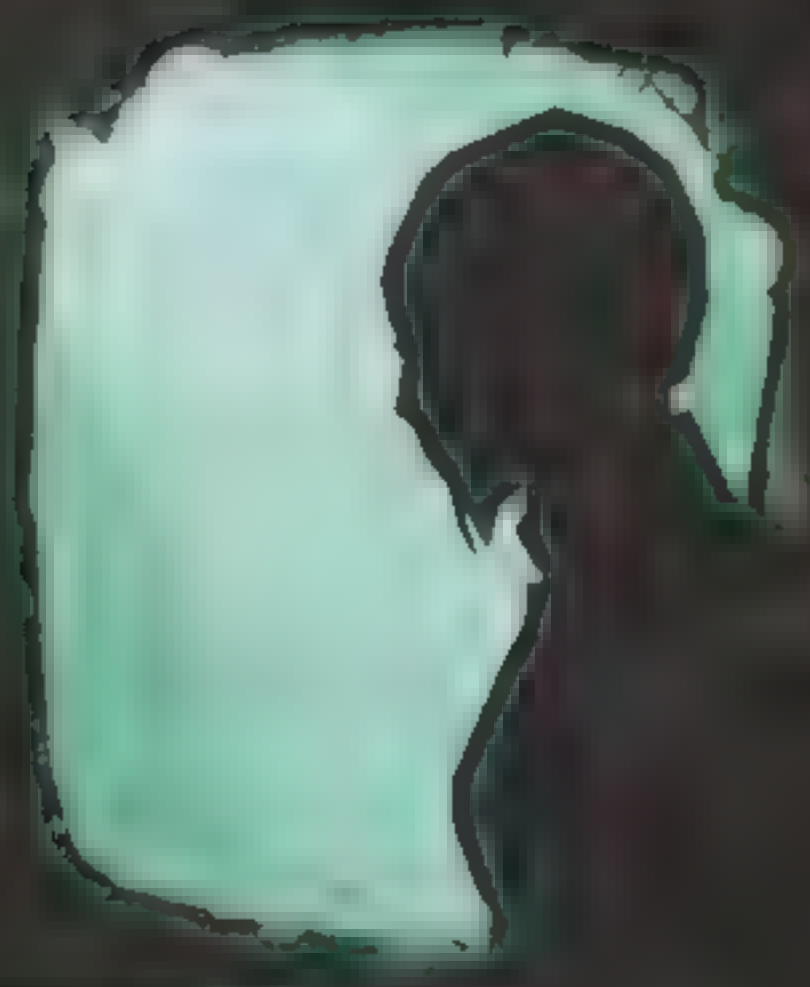
Are you sure?

I think those shards we found are what's left of it. Something big happened here, Jessica.

No shit—

God dammit, who's there?

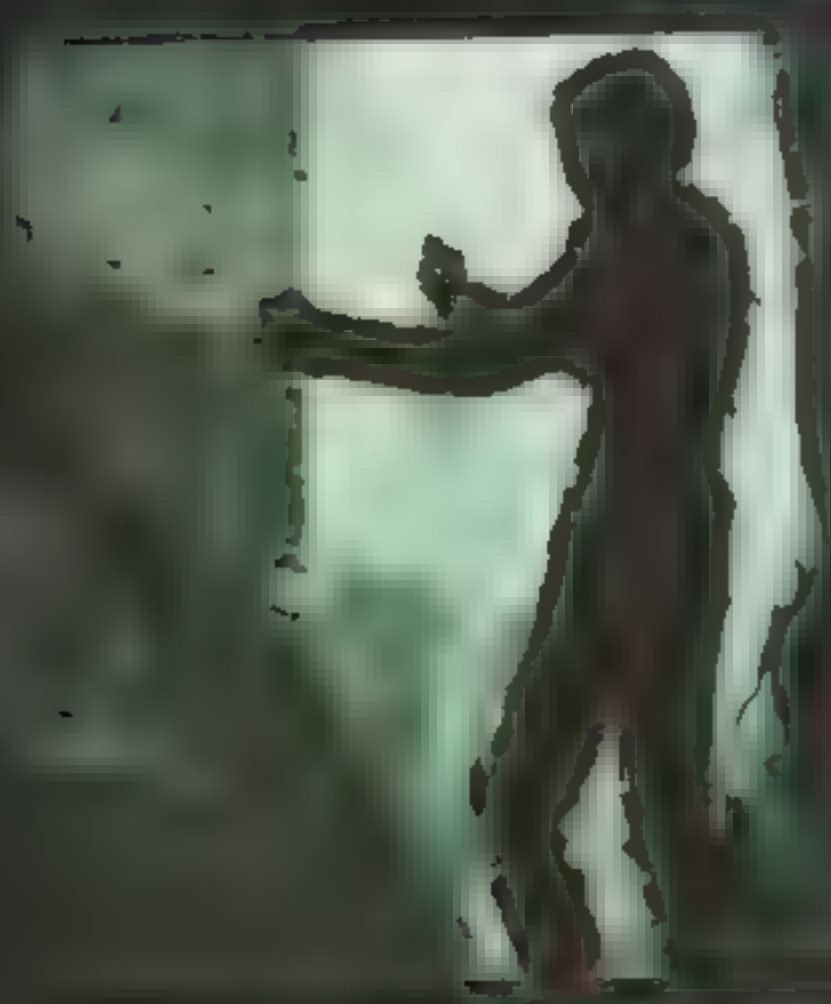
Whoa! Yo, OK?



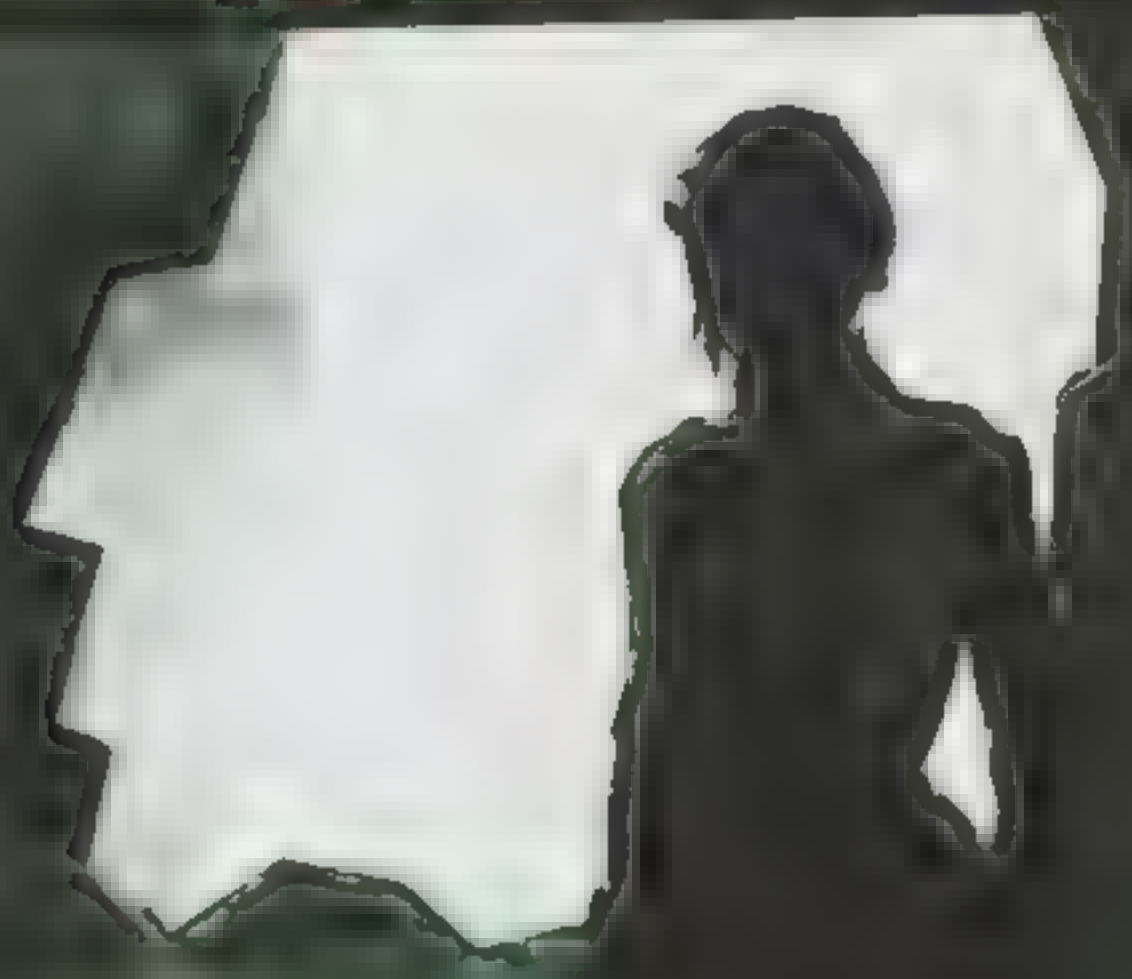
Keep hearing movement behind me, but there's nobody there.

Listen, don't tell Dkeke about this marker thing. I don't want him to think repairing the shockpoint isn't necessary.

You got it.

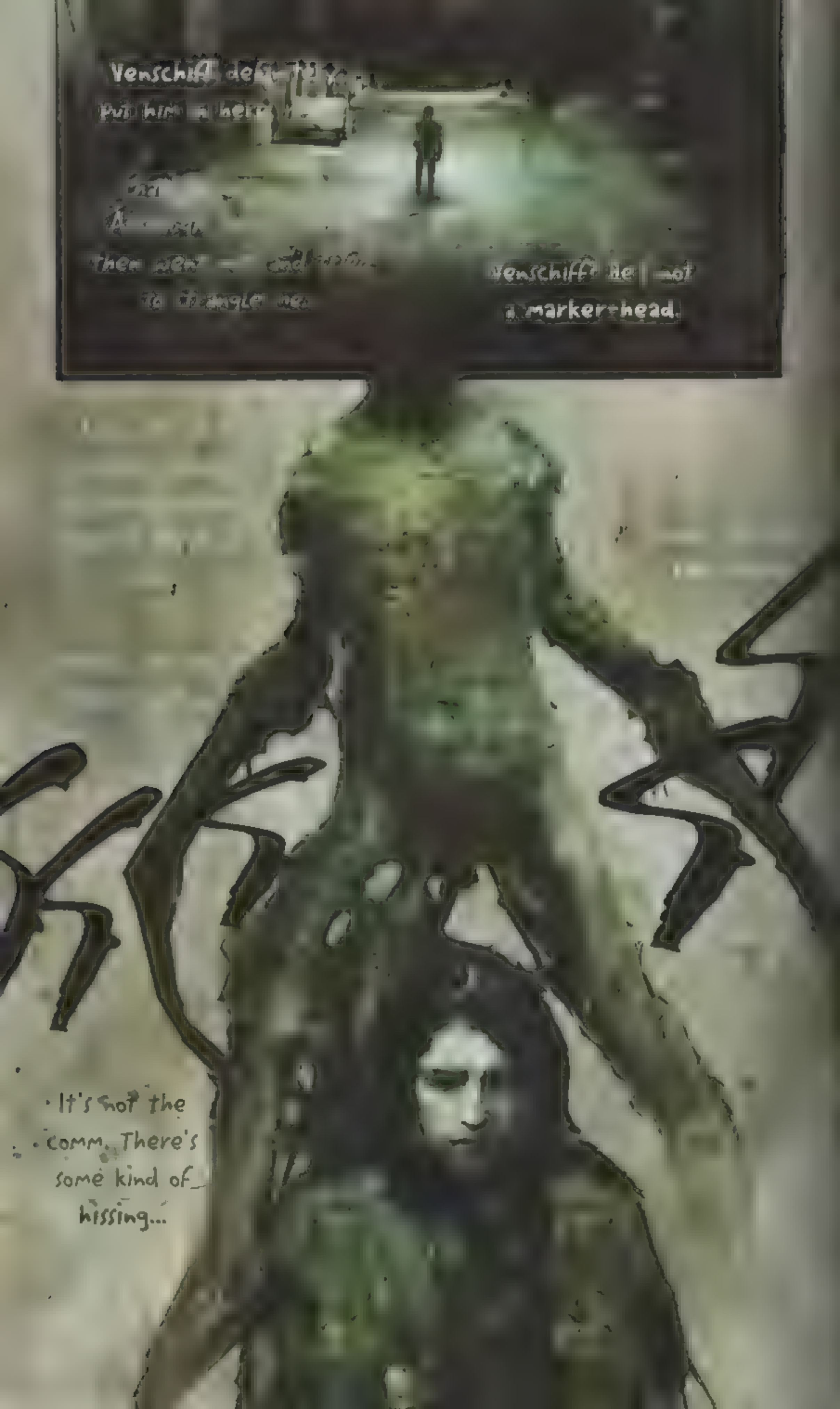


I reckon we've got an hour tops, before the military gets here. If we can't repair before then, I say we just abandon and get out while we can.



Malyech?

Where are you?


Venschiff de
put him in here
Venschiff he | not
a marker-head.
It's not the comm. There's some kind of hissing...

Captain, come in! Do you read?
CAPTAIN!

What happened?

FUCK!

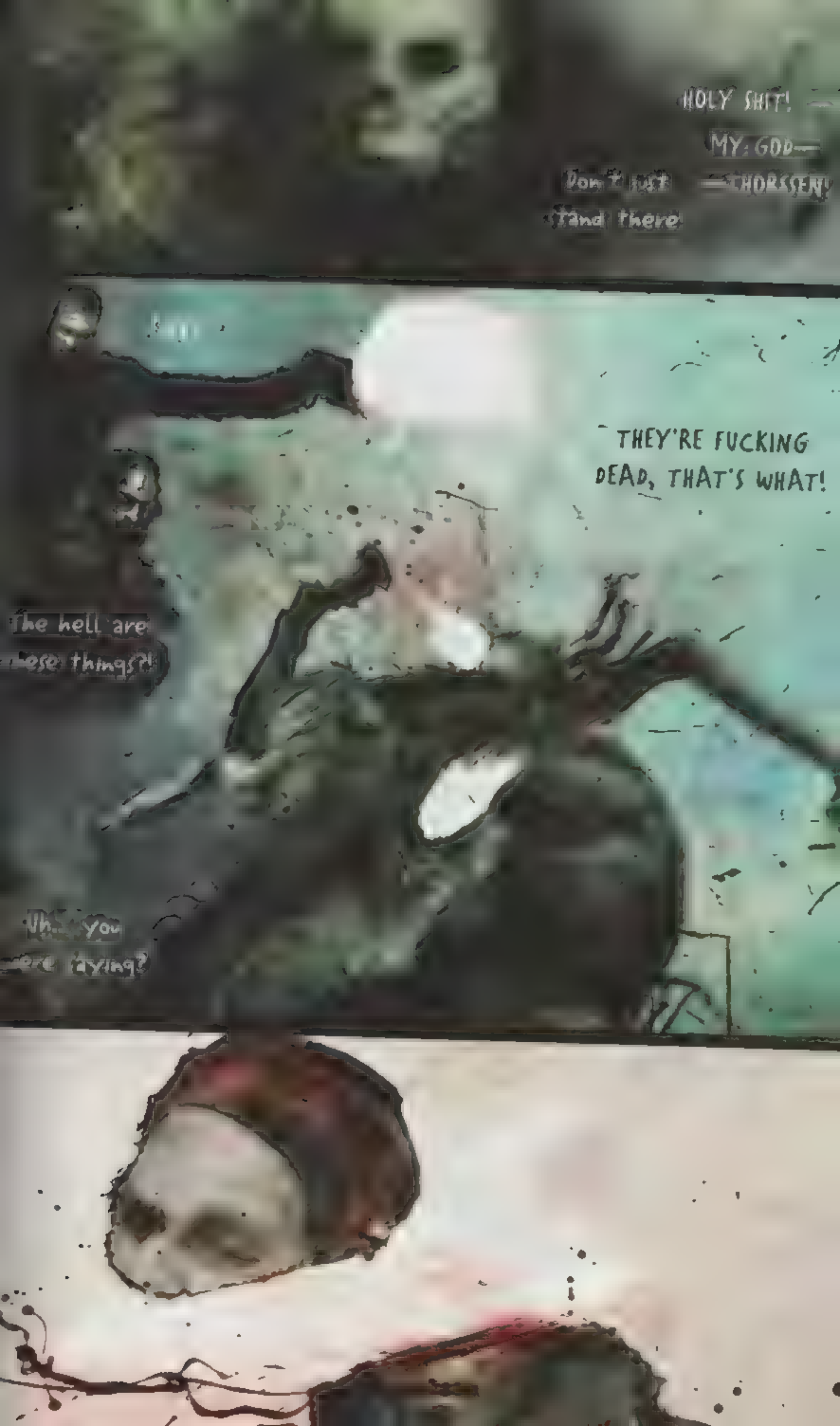
I don't know, it cut off. But **Malyech** wasn't in the brig, and she thought someone was following her...

Screw the

Let's all go down there and—

Too much weird shit going on around here.

Jesus fu—


HOLY SHIT!
MY GOD—
Don't just —THORSSEN!
stand there!
THEY'RE FUCKING DEAD, THAT'S WHAT!
the hell are these things?!
Why you were trying?

What happening
am I happening
This has to be
that blocked the
pull off
this ship!
Die, you
bastard!
I shoot the
relay!
What?
No, that's
gonna—
AAAAAAAAAAAH!

Holy shit...

Captain?

Jessica, dammit!

I don't know if you can hear me, but we need to evacuate, right now!

...Goddamn, guys—

—I'm sorry.

There's some kind of life form on board, they're lethal...

...And they're all over the ship.

and clear, Schneider
taking a look around
engine room, and I got
it doesn't look good
Okeke?
Are you
there?
get bad
and water
Maybe I got
something
What in the name of Alex
are you talking about
Who there? Come
out from behind there.
we won't—
—Hurt you—

Aaaaah
Okeke!

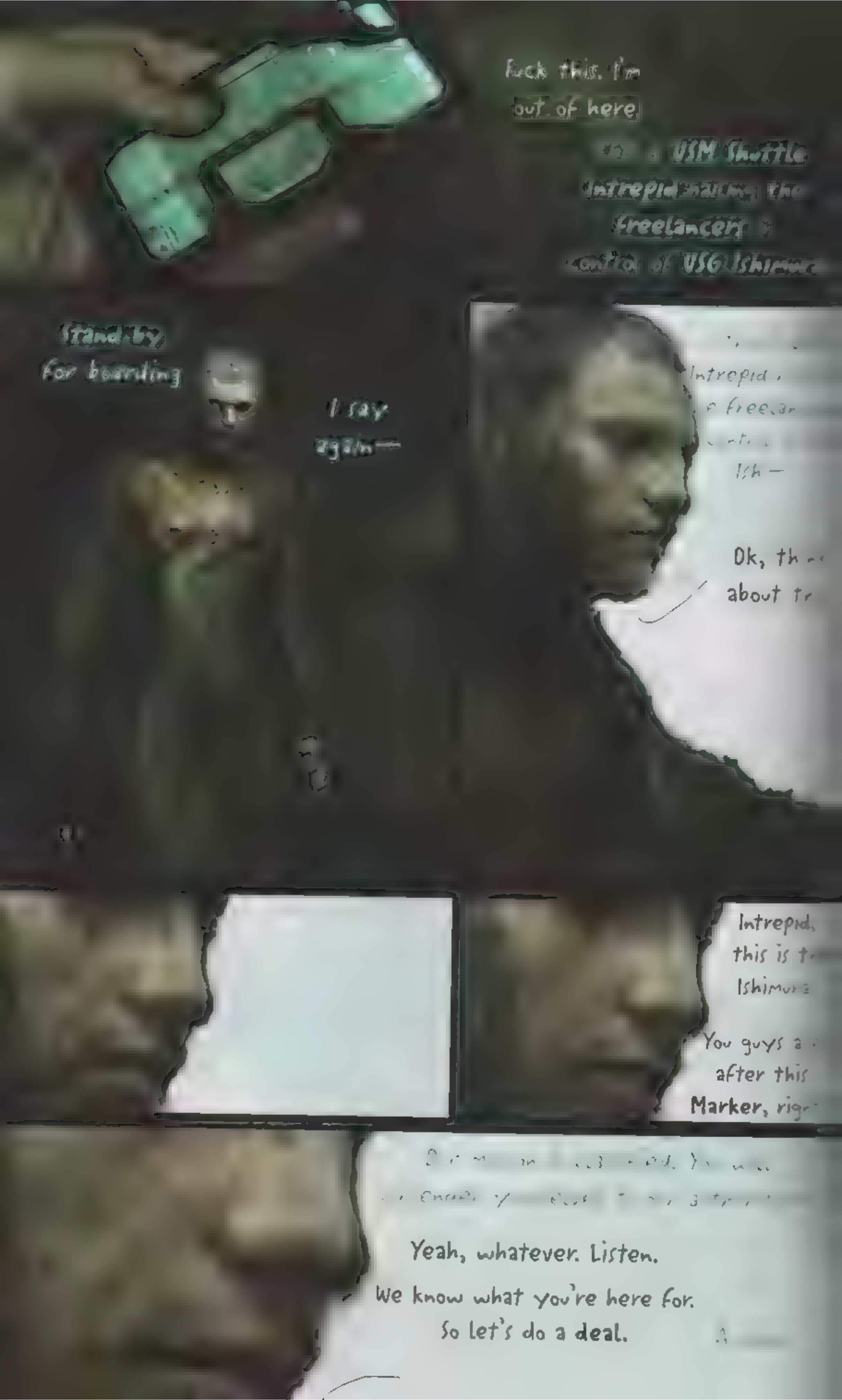
All clear.
Anyway.

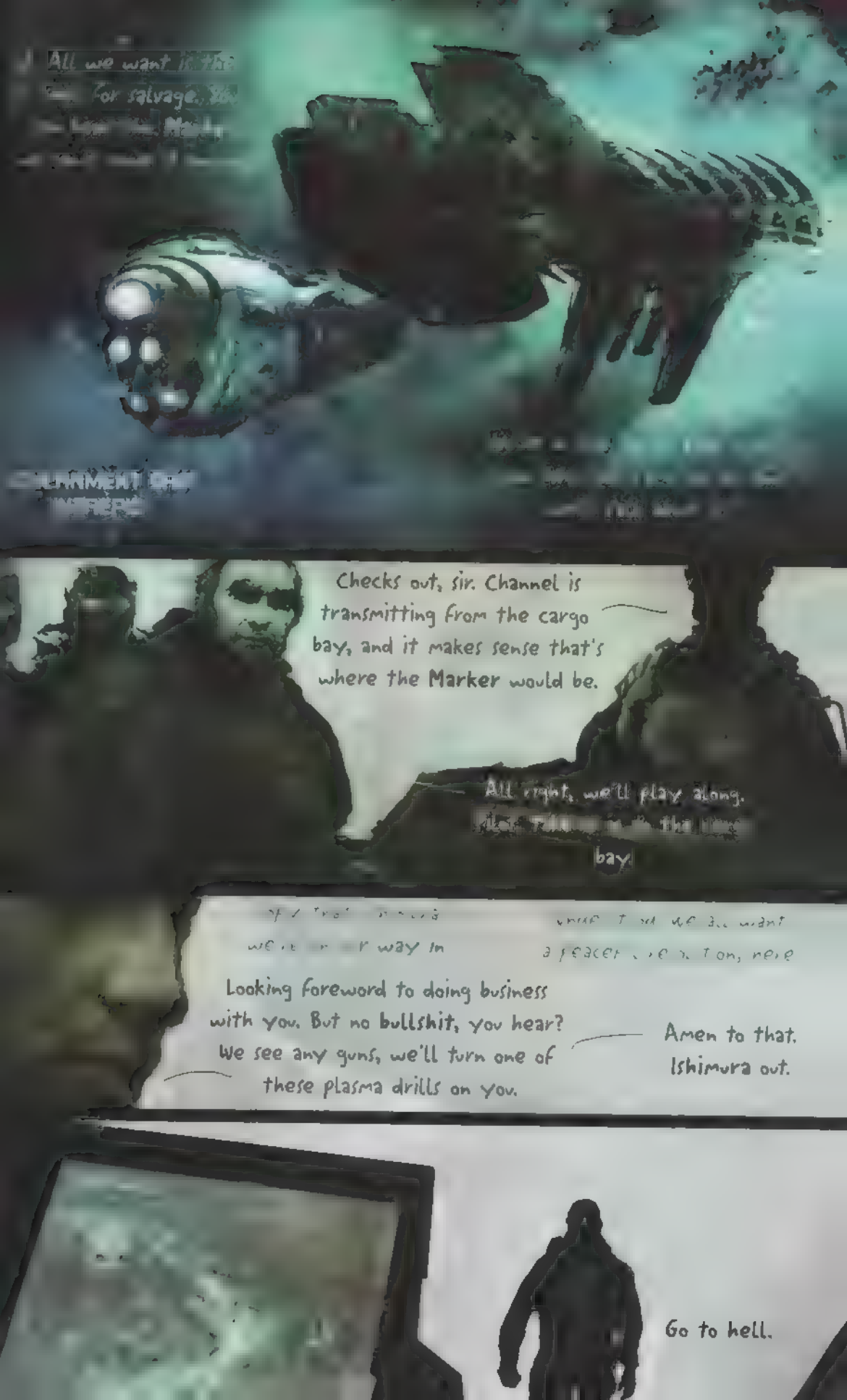
Re-animation's
ready started.

could make our
job a lot easier

Still, we have to be
sure. Patch into the
ship's frequency...

have to say in [illegible] yes


fuck this. I'm
out of here
VSM Shuttle
Intrepid
Freelancers
USG Ishimura
Stand by
for boarding
I say
again—
Intrepid
Ok, th
about tr
Intrepid,
this is t
Ishimu
You guys a
after this
Marker, rig
Yeah, whatever. Listen.
We know what you're here for.
So let's do a deal.


All we want is the
For salvage.
Checks out, sir. Channel is transmitting from the cargo bay, and it makes sense that's where the Marker would be.
All right, we'll play along.
bay.
way in
Looking foreword to doing business with you. But no bullshit, you hear? We see any guns, we'll turn one of these plasma drills on you.
Amen to that. Ishimura out.
Go to hell.

Cargo bay? Cut them off?

No.

Wait...

...He lied.

Spoofed it.

Somehow.

Transmission actually came from the bridge.

That was Schneider. Right? He's good.

I'll inform the Intrepid.

No, it'll tip off the freelancers. The Marines' deaths will buy us time to reach the bridge before Schneider can leave.

I can activate the quarantine locks to keep all inside.

Good idea.

Do it.

But don't tell the marines anyway.

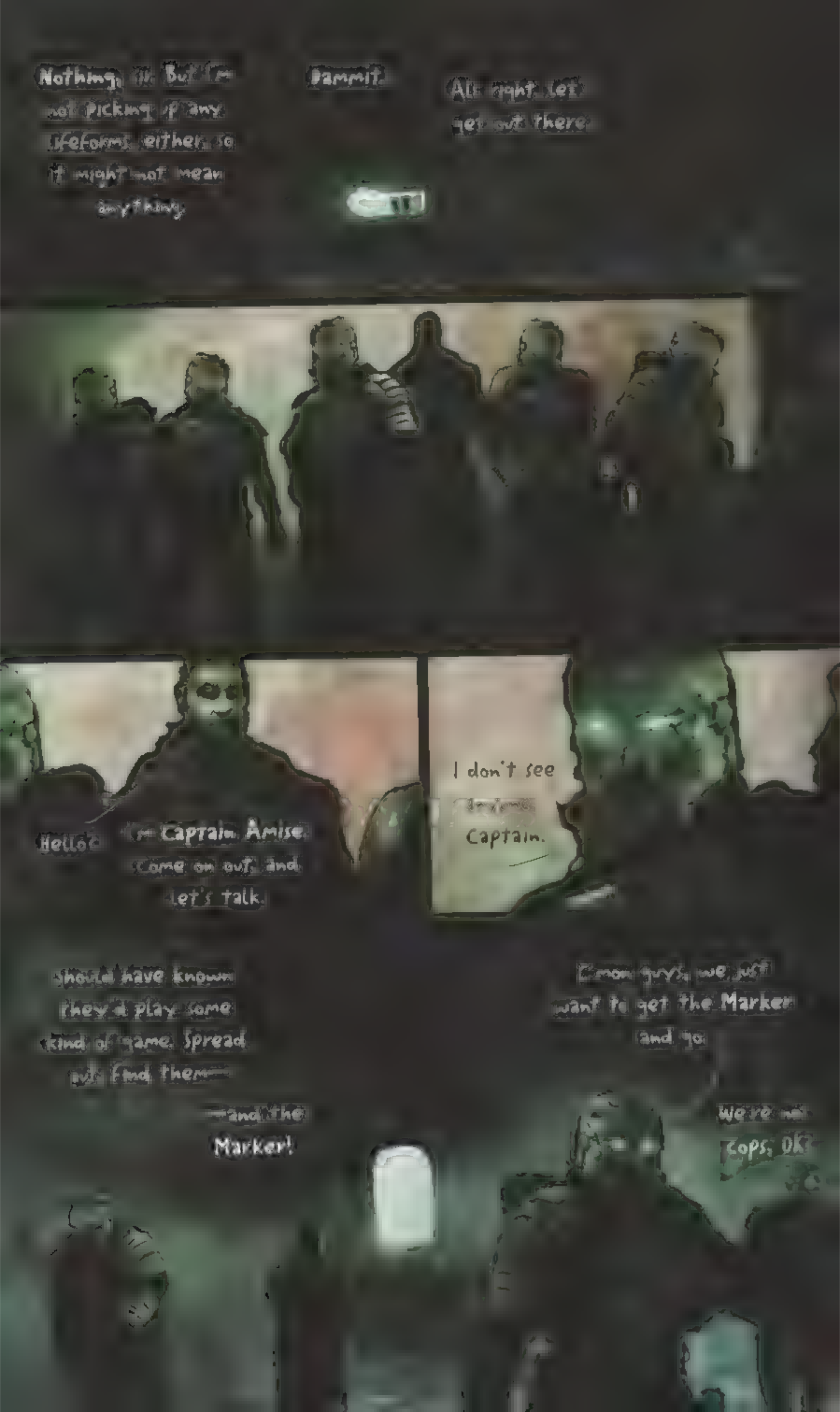
It'll save us the trouble.

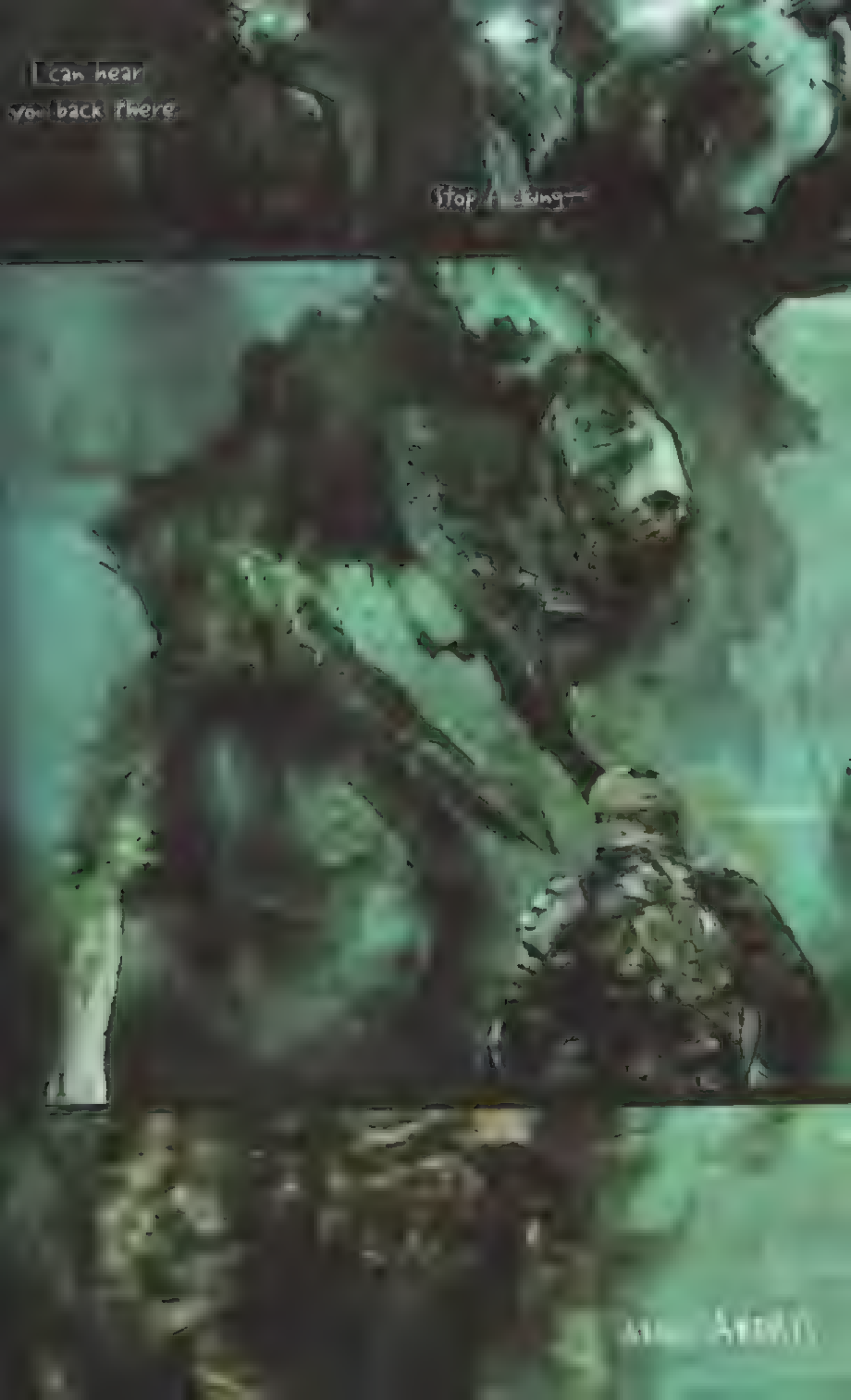
USG ISHIMURA
CARGO BAY
Look at this mess. The old girl took one hell of a beating.
I don't see the Marker.
Can't for it
It might not blow up anyway. Its bad intelligence indicates—
Goddamn it just do it Sergeant

Nothing in but I'm not picking up any lifeforms either, so it might not mean anything.

Dammit.

All right, let's get out there.




I can hear
you back there
Stop talking—

WOOF

Sounds like
you guys found
the Gamen

WOOFWOOF

It's like you
found all my
friends.

I'm like you
[illegible]

Maybe it's
time—

WOOF

WOOFWOOF

WOOF

—You found me.

FUCK!

Oh, what?

Now the quarantine kicks in?

CURRENT LEVEL 0.39 SIEVERTS

Yeah, why aren't I not surprised.

There's gotta be some way to override this.

A stealth ship?

[illegible] bay...

Not good.

Stefan, my friend. It's time for Plan B.

The fuck is going on here!

Immediate evac, go! Go! Right now, pilot!

Launch!

—lock up.

That bastard Chang's going to answer for this—

Security Crew
just bought it.

Forget about the
freelancers, they're the
prime target.

They know where
the Marker is.

If they're not
already all dead,
of course.

Shut down that
quarantine.

He's not that good.
He has to be in here,
somewhere.

Oh, shit.
Over there.

Don't see Schneider's body
here. Could he have doubled
spoofed you?

Don't tell me
it's his corpse.
Are we going to
have to cow the
whole ship ourselves
for the Marker?

I don't think that's
the Marker.

We thought the shard Copland had was a one-off, some kind of slice for analysis.

But this [illegible] more than anyone would require for sample [illegible]

[illegible] we find [illegible] are now what we [illegible] before the [illegible] public

No, no, no!

FUCK!

You think he's still alive.

But how did he get out? The quarantine didn't lift until we got here.

Look over there and tell me...

...Don't EVA lockers normally hold four suits?

—Oh, shuttle bay!
ahead, sail far, sail
blowing the whole
goddamn whistle
—Oh, for—
—of course they
can survive in a
vacuum. Perfect!

creepy [illegible]
[illegible]
You!
Hold it right there!
Sorry, fellas. Something tells me I'm dead either way—
—Shit, and maybe soone than I thought.

All right.
Guess they want me alive. For now.
Shortcut time.

he does
He be stupid
enough to follow
him

Mr Schneider, I presume.

No sudden moves, please.

Outflanked, huh?

So I guess you know the layout of this ship alot better than me.

We did no homework.

Then you'll understand

When I tell you that I just remote piloted our shockring into the Ishimura's engine bay, set for an event horizon of maximum radius.

Bullshit.

You don't have the balls.

Really.

My entire crew is dead. Our Nest was destroyed. The object we preceded, Marker, it turns out, is a bitty piece.

And even if you bastards don't kill me, I'll rot in jail for a lifetime.

Literally, I have nothing to lose.

You don't even know the half of it.

Where you're guessing, that's Marker pretty much in pieces.

No, I do[illegible]

You could [illegible] around right now [illegible] those shards in [illegible]ad, [illegible]re chasi[illegible] me.

[illegible] but not theories. Why is that?

We need to know what you know.

What you saw.

You could have just asked.

You don't possess the language to tell us.

They're closing in.

Regrouping.

I know.

I get it now.

Shit.

The madness, those weird symbols... It's all connected, right? It makes people crazy, and those fucking monsters are a part of it!

What are they?

I knew you were bluffing.
CURRENT LEVEL 0.43
Ah shit—
You lying bastard.
I knew you were bluffing.

Sorry, guys
STOP!
SCHNEIDER!
I WILL SHOOT YO—
AAAA

I was going to say
the same thing

Off my ship damnit!
How the hell am I
supposed to—

Get out of here
All right, baby.
Let's see what
you can do

Attention military
blockade
hell
know what
is called.
I'm one of the
magpies you
you sleep to kill
called
to speak to whoever
in charge.
health
They're no friends
of mine captain
Secretary
Change
Who am I
talking to?
My name's not
...Only what I
have to say.

Ishimura is equipped with the Vigilis Belt found aboard Solar Mark eight-one-five.
I'm concerned you're welcome to it.
Who the hell is this? How did you get access to that stealth ship?
Don't you dare!
The original owners were detained. Have to say, this is a pretty cool ship.
Remain where you are, and await a military escort! You are hereby detained, on my authority!
Even got a small shockpoint drive. Talk about the march of technology.
Sorry, Dave, but nobody has authority over me...

least of all some
shitbag Politician. Good
ck with the Ishimura.
You'll need it.

DEAD SPACE SALVAGE

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